

Fellow of the Society on March 8, 1850, and served four years on the Council, 1860-1864.

ISAAC FLETCHER, F.R.S., of Tarnbank, Cumberland, was born on February 22, 1827. He was the second son of John Wilson Fletcher, of Tarnbank. His mother, Mary, was a daughter of John Allason, of Beech Hill. He married, on December 13, 1861, Esther, daughter of the late Mr. Joseph King, of Wassall Grove, Stourbridge. He unsuccessfully contested Cockermouth in April 1868, but was elected at the general election in the following November, and retained the seat till his death. His politics were liberal. He was a Justice of the Peace for Cumberland. He died by his own hand, in London, on April 3, 1879.

Mr. Fletcher was elected a Fellow of this Society on May 11, 1849. He at first used a telescope of 4.16 inches aperture, for which he built a small observatory, described in vol. x., p. 137, of the *Monthly Notices*; subsequently he obtained a telescope of $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches aperture, the mounting of which is described in vol. xxv., p. 242. He chiefly devoted himself to micrometrical measurements of double stars, and several communications of his on this subject have appeared in the *Monthly Notices*. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society on June 7, 1855.

SANDFORD GORTON early evinced a taste for mechanical and scientific pursuits, and astronomy soon became the principal occupation of his leisure. Soon after his marriage he went to reside at Stamford Villa, Downs Road, Clapton, where he established an Observatory. His principal telescope, which was of $3\frac{3}{8}$ -in. aperture, by Ross, was first mounted on an equatoreal stand by Cooke, and afterwards upon a stand with clock motion by Dallmeyer. To his instruments and Observatory Mr. Gorton was constantly adding ingenious contrivances. He became an ardent and persevering general observer, keeping an accurate record of his work. He was an excellent draughtsman, and his delineations of sun-spots and planetary features are marked by careful execution and strict fidelity. In 1861 he presented a series of 111 Indian-ink drawings of *Jupiter*, made between 1839 and 1861, to the Society (*Monthly Notices*, vol. xxii., p. 60). It was during his residence in the Downs Road that Mr. Gorton determined to establish a purely astronomical periodical. In the address which accompanied the first number of the *Astronomical Register*, he states that it occurred to him that it would be very desirable "to collect together those stray fragments of information which, though not of sufficient importance possibly to occupy the pages of the *Monthly Notices*, may nevertheless, in the shape of passing conversations, or occasional notes, be useful for future reference,"

and that he wished "to introduce a sort of astronomical *Notes and Queries*, a medium of communication for amateurs and others," believing that "many valuable contributions to the science are now scattered in different publications: collected in one periodical they would be of far more benefit to the astronomical inquirer than they are now." Mr. Gorton was also of opinion that an account of the discussions which took place at the meetings of this Society should be published, both for the sake of those who were unable to be present, and also in order that some permanent record of them should be preserved; and the admirable reports of our proceedings contained in the *Astronomical Register* have always formed one of its chief characteristics. The first number appeared in January, 1863, and the whole of the first volume was printed by Mr. Gorton himself, at his own private printing press. The frontispiece of this volume is a plate of *Jupiter*, from a sketch by Mr. Gorton.

On his removal to his residence, Parnham House, Pembury Road, Clapton, he gave up his Observatory, and was often heard to express his regret that he had been compelled to abandon it, after all the labour that he had devoted to its construction. His health at this time began visibly to decline, but he nevertheless continued to edit and manage the *Astronomical Register*, in which he took the greatest interest, until 1872, when he was compelled with much reluctance to relinquish it. Since this time it has been continued by the Rev. J. C. Jackson.

Mr. Gorton had always a great fondness for nautical matters, and during the last five or six years of his life he resided during the summer and early autumn months in his yacht, the "North Star"; there is no doubt that the change of scene and pure and bracing breezes which he thus met with somewhat prolonged his life. His debility continually increased, and was at length succeeded by utter helplessness. He died on February 14, 1879, in his 56th year. He was elected a Fellow of the Society on June 8, 1860.

Sir ROWLAND HILL, the third son of Thomas Wright Hill, was born at Kidderminster on December 3, 1795, in a house which had belonged to his forefathers for some generations. The war with France had caused the ruin of the business in which his father was engaged, and the family was reduced to great straits. In her desire to secure an education for her children, his mother persuaded her husband to give up trade, for which he was very little fitted, and establish a school near Birmingham. At the age of eleven Rowland began to assist his father in teaching, and a year later he had ceased to be a pupil and had become altogether a teacher. While still quite a youth he and his brother Matthew began to discover the deficiencies in their father's school, and to set about reforming them. Matthew chiefly concerned himself with improving the instruction, while Rowland dealt with the